

The McGill Daily

January 11, 1999

Volume 88 Issue 35

remembering Pee Wee since 1911

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Agmont Busts the Union

WORKERS PROTEST FIRING OF UNION LEADER

BY Yael Friedman

We just want our Daddy to go to back to work" read a sign held by children at last Thursday's demonstration in front of a local textiles factory.

Around 80 protesters, employees of the Agmont Textiles factory along with their families, demonstrated in front of the plant in support of the attempt to unionize. They were also protesting the harassment that union leader Roderick Carreon and others have endured for their role in trying to form a labour union.

Last March, Carreon, with the support of a strong majority of workers at Agmont, filed a petition to form a union that would combat the allegedly unbearable working conditions found at the factory.

Carreon was fired for his union activities on December 30.

The demonstrators tried to enter the factory and present a petition signed by workers to the manager, Steve Aikens, to reinstate Carreon, but were turned away at the door by angry security.

Carreon's wife, Joy Carreon, explained that the union was organized in response to poor pay and conditions: "Long hours and bad wages. It is too hot there." A flyer at the protest stated that the workers prevailed through 12-hour work days at minimum wage, poor ventilation, and several health hazards including contact with carcinogens that the workers have no protection from.

Since a large majority of the workers are newly-arrived immigrants and/or refugees, forming a union did not seem like a viable solution.

Malcolm Guy, who works at

the Centre for Phillipine Concerns and is a lead organizer in the Current Agmont effort, said it was difficult to form the union.

"Because there is such a large turnover of workers, the management claimed it was hard to prove who was for the union and who wasn't," he said.

Guy added that many were reluctant to join because they did not want to risk losing their jobs. Joy Carreon explained that one of the employees at Agmont initially signed the union card, but when approached by management, claimed that pressure was placed on him to do so. He then retracted his "yes" vote for a union.

According to Guy, this is indicative of the strong-armed opposition to unions common in many textile firms.

"The Canadian textile companies that are being threatened with unionization, often hire American firms whose sole job is to teach tactics for union busting," he said.

Disgusted with the conditions, Roderick Carreon followed the example of a friend, who at another factory successfully formed a union, and began working towards achieving the goal of basic rights for himself and his workers. He took this initiative with the support of UNITE (Union of Needle trade and Industrial Textile Employees), who represent employees in both the United States and Canada.

This is not the first time that a predominantly immigrant-based workforce has tried to gain fundamental workers' rights with great difficulty and aggression from the management.

Two years ago, the employees at a local Peerless Clothing plant

(a 2,400-person workforce composed mainly of immigrants from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Haiti) signed union

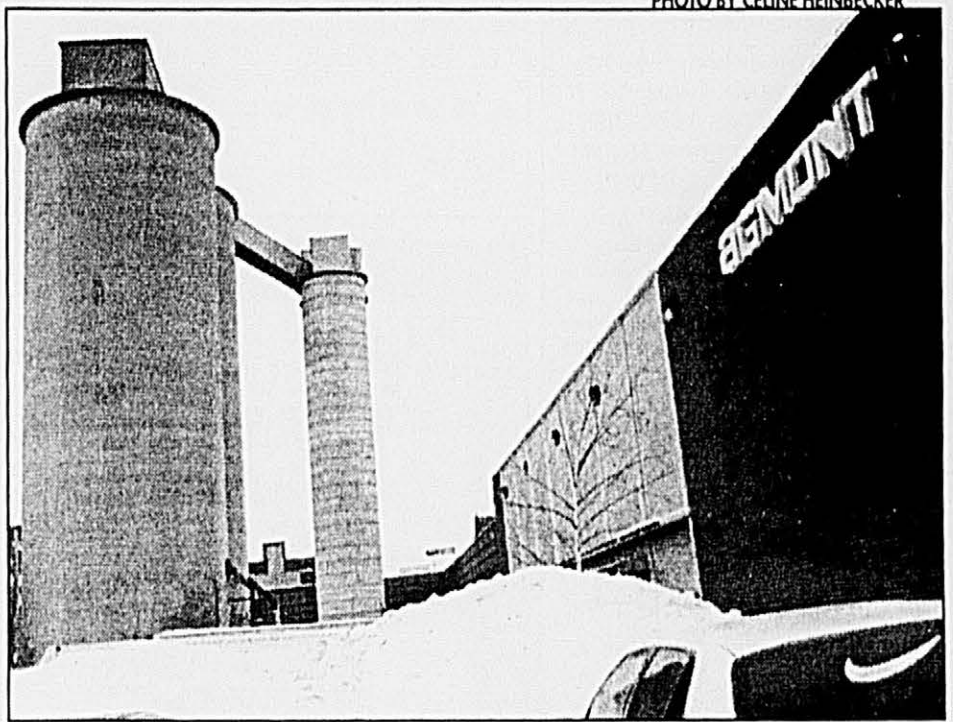
cards in an attempt to gain rights through the standardization of factory labour. The following day, 35 workers at the Peerless factory were fired, supposedly for "being late." Eventually the workers did unionize and their successful struggle was captured in a docu-

mentary for CBC by Guy.

Two of the main supporting groups present at yesterday's rally were the McGill Student Christian Movement (SCM) and QPIRG. Along with other SCM members, Jennifer Nicholson, spokesperson for Montréal's SCM,

declared the group's "opposition to industries and business that do not grant fair wages, fair hours, and fair conditions for workers." She concluded with a rallying cry of "Justice for Agmont workers!"

(continued on page 9)



THE AGMONT PLANT: SITE OF THE DEMONSTRATION AND LABOUR STRUGGLES

Changes In Store for MUCTC

BRAKE TROUBLES, FEE HIKES AND NEW AD CAMPAIGNS SHARE THE SPOTLIGHT

BY LOUGI ADDARIO-BERRY

Wheelchair accessible buses with a possible flaw in the braking mechanism are being returned to service, despite the objections of the Montréal Urban Community Transit Commission (MUCTC) maintenance union.

The problem was first reported by bus drivers last week. Apparently, the brake system on the low floor buses was not responding properly due to low temperatures. The buses were pulled from service while tests were conducted. This resulted in the cancellation of service on nine bus lines, as well as morning service on one line, due to "proximity to a metro station or another bus route." Service on most lines was reduced due to the malfunction.

MUCTC conducted tests on the

buses involving attempts to reproduce the conditions under which the anomaly had occurred. The buses were taken to "refrigerator

needed replacement." The tests, however, failed to uncover a universal reason for the error. Despite this, the MUCTC decided in conjunction with Nova Bus, the manufacturer, to allow vehicles to return to circulation last Friday.

"The MUCTC will be continuing testing, but in the meantime the buses will still be on the road," said Réjean DesGroseiller, a spokesperson for the MUCTC maintenance union. "They're taking a risk here."

Though the problem was originally brought to light by the bus drivers themselves, there has been no reluctance to return to driving the potentially faulty buses.

(continued on page 9)

New Transit Fares as of April 1

\$1.90 - 1 ticket
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rooms," where they were subjected to temperatures below -40°. According to the MUCTC, in some cases the problem was "just a three-dollar spring which



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January 20

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(For All Union Members)
January 27

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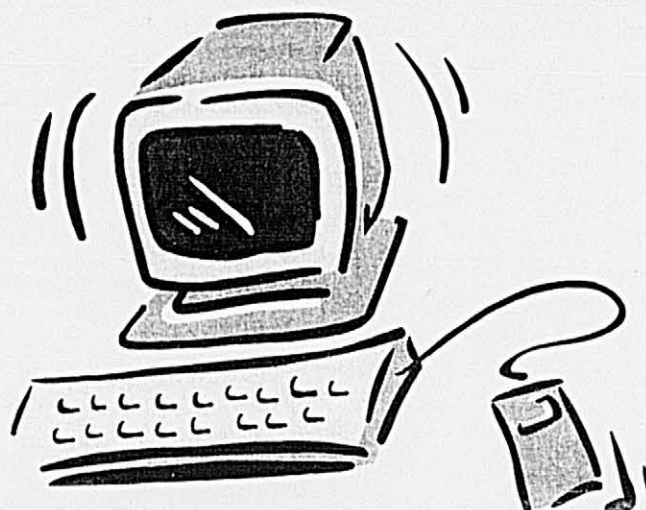
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The McGILL Daily

volume 88 number 35

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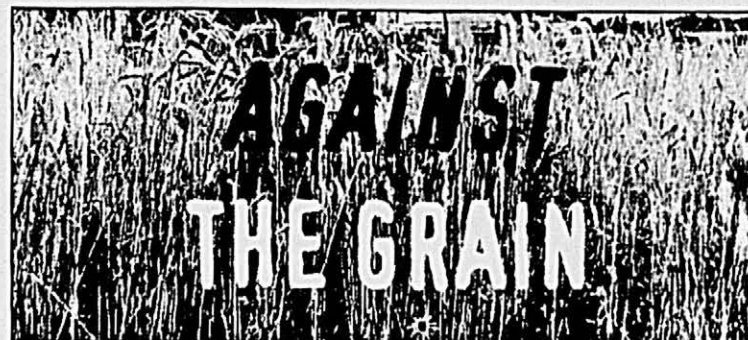
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The Daily is a founding member of Canadian University Press and Presse étudiante du Québec.

Printed on 20% Recycled Paper.
ISSN 1192-4608

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Noah's Ark and Eco-Activism

BY
JEFF
WEBBER

Making Jesus and spir-
itual texts the basis of
saving the earth could
lead to the delegitimization of the
environmentalist movement. So
called "spiritual" collusion be-
tween organized religions and
eco-activists is allegedly spread-
ing across Canada and the United
States. It's difficult to determine
the width and depth of this new
alliance, but even its discussion
is a reason for concern.

In Canada, the epicentre of this
young partnership is British Co-
lumbia, not surprising consider-
ing the long history of environ-
mentalism in the province. The
organization Visions for the Earth,
probably the most active propo-
nent in the West, is joining hands
with televangelists and church
groups alike in their crusade to
prevent ecological disaster.

Nationally, the Canadian
Parks and Wilderness Society has
played a large role in aligning
various religious and environ-
mental groups, and organizing
conferences explicitly linked to
organized religion. Harvey
Locke, the vice-president of con-
servation for Visions for the
Earth, was recently quoted in The
Globe And Mail arguing, "We
need to restore a sense of the sa-
cred to Creation if we are to save
it.... To do this, we need to reach
beyond the traditional environ-
mental community to the spir-
itual community."

Let me begin my criticism with
a disclaimer: there is certainly
nothing wrong with religious or-
ganizations supporting environ-
mentalism—quite obviously it is
a desirable end. However, what
should be alarming is any sort of
official alliance. If religion is to
become ingrained in the dis-
course of environmental activism,
two central problems seem appar-
ent. First, no doubt at least some
secular individuals currently sup-
porting the movement will be al-
ienated by reference to biblical
scripture, or other sorts of reli-
gious sophistry, in environmental
texts, speeches, conferences and
so on.

Second, if the objective is to
reach a bigger support base for

environmentalism, clearly analo-
gies to saving the earth such as
keeping Noah's Ark afloat is not
the most effective route. Contem-
porary media operates on a pre-
dominantly secular premise, al-
legedly reporting "facts" to the
viewer. Readers of newspapers,
and viewers of television are not
accustomed to, nor are they likely
to accept, warnings of ecological
decay if it based on spiritual
rather than empirical data.

The successes environmental-
ists have had, such as the cessa-
tion of clear-cut logging in B.C.
over the next four years, have
come not from religious senti-
ments, but media coverage and
publicity campaigns such as pe-
titions against logging and other
similar activities. Public an-
nouncements, press releases and
so forth, have focused on the sci-
entific evidence substantiating
environmentalists' claims regard-
ing pollution, clear-cutting, and
various other forms of degrada-
tion. The emphasis here is that
scientific evidence lends cre-
dence to the argument, whereas
spiritual declarations are signifi-
cantly less digestible commodi-
ties for the general public.

Furthermore, there are prob-
lems surrounding the positions of
organized religion around other
ethical questions. For instance,
evangelical, far-right Republicans
in the U.S. are becoming measur-
ably powerful within mainstream
American environmental groups.
It seems to me, many environ-
mental issues cannot be separated
from other political questions that
invariably divide the traditionally
progressive, leftist environmental
groups and right-wing, religious
organizations.

For instance, one could not
envision a Republican govern-
ment of the U.S., backed by Chris-
tian evangelicals, denouncing the

Multilateral Agreement on Invest-
ment, and all the threats to a sus-
tainable ecology that this agree-
ment would entail in its present
form.

To take this one step further,
respect for the environment can-
not be separated from respect for
human dignity. Along with activ-
ism stressing the dire necessity of
protecting nature, we must simul-
taneously demand respect for all
humans, including people of all
sexual orientations, women, and
ethnic minorities. The vast major-
ity of organized religions have not
illustrated the capacity to ensure
this equality.

In Canada, perhaps more im-
portant coalitions to build upon
might be relations between envi-
ronmentalists and unions (prima-
rily logging unions in B.C.); and
between environmentalists and
aboriginals. These two potential
coalitions seem irrefutably linked
to the success of the environmen-
talist cause.

Currently, disputes over whal-
ing, logging and others conten-
tious issues, have kept these
groups divided. It is imperative to
engage the historically oppressed
aboriginals of Canada, the logging,
and the union communities in
environmentalist discourse. Sus-
tainable practices that keep em-
ployment levels up, cultural
norms alive, and the earth intact
are desirable objectives for all
these groups. Loggers won't be
logging in the years to come if
trees are not protected. Similarly,
maintenance of traditional, abo-
riginal practices will be impossi-
ble to maintain if nature contin-
ues to erode at its present rate.

Rather than abandoning the
scientific, secular, inclusive
premise of environmentalism for
the spiritual road of organized
religion, I think the environmen-
talist community should re-evalu-
ate what it is trying to achieve.
As I've noted, if it's mass appeal,
environmental education, and re-
spect for the earth and all living
beings that inhabit it which com-
pose the goals of environmental-
ism, an official coalition with or-
ganized religion could produce
insurmountable obstacles.

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4. Torn at the knees.
5. Worn out on the cheeks.
6. Below my waist (bellybutton).
7. Cut-off at the thighs.
8. Pulled to my chin.
9. Loose around the hips.
10. Unbuttoned all the way.

By: Rosanna S.

1. With a great tan.
2. Over my longjohns on the slopes.
3. With my bikini on a sailboat.
4. In a convertible on a sunny day.
5. With my Birkenstocks.
6. Skipping class on a Friday afternoon.
7. Hitch-hiking home for Xmas.
8. Chatting on-line.
9. Over my lucky undies.
10. Two words: Plumber's Bum.

By: Debbie H.

Other winners of Levi's® gift certificates:

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Nathasha D.
Morris S.
Fabienne P.
Ted R.



1. Long & low with my platforms.
2. Cut-off & short with my tube top.
3. Hiphuggin' so my tatoo peeks out at you.
4. Top three buttons undone so you see my boxers & my navel ring.
5. Rolled to the knee for wading in the sea.
6. Really tight on a Friday night.
7. "Commando"
8. Tucked into my cowboy boots for riding a horse.
9. With my leather jacket for riding my hog.
10. When I'm steppin' out with my baby.

By: Monica T.

1. Wear them straight legged.
2. Wear them boot cut.
3. Wear them flared.
4. Wear them bell bottomed.
5. Wear them high and wear them low.
6. Wear them ripped and with patches.
7. Wear them ironed with a crease.
8. Wear them rumpled, wear them ripped.
9. Wear them faded wear them old.
10. Wear them new and wear them out.

By: Sonia N.

1. Eat in your Levi's
2. Sleep in your Levi's
3. Play in your Levi's
4. Learn in your Levi's
5. Fight in your Levi's
6. Make up in your Levi's
7. Give in your Levi's
8. Take in your Levi's
9. Dream in your Levi's
10. Live in your Levi's

By: Philip M.



The McGill Daily

Comment: Selling Out with The Daily

SPONSORING CANCER AND

BY AMY PAPAELIAS

DIRTY MONEY

Starting in tomorrow's edition of the *Défilé Français*, faithful readers will be able to witness a Daily publication at one of its worst moments. As the wrath of The Man breathes heavily down our backs, the editorial boards of the McGill Daily and the *Défilé Français* have jointly voted to print Du Maurier Arts advertisements, promoting the sale and use of cigarettes.

What does this vote say about The Daily as an organization, as an institution at McGill University? We've had a long history as the "independent campus paper," trying to save the seals and the world in every one of our publications. This vote says a lot about the present state of The Daily and a potentially frightening future.

Before voting on Thursday evening, we were given a list of reasons created by our business office convincing us why we should accept these ads. Some of these reasons included:

-\$18000 is a lot of money for The Daily to lose

-maybe its time for the Daily to re-examine its moral and ethical values and pay more attention to

getting money into the paper-money that could be used to rent nicer space, increase salary and / or honoraria, buy more equipment or furniture

-not taking ads for moral reasons, without writing about why you forfeited revenue, is ridiculous because we lose money and no one even knows about it

-other newspapers and magazines accept all advertising - they are free to criticize the advertiser in the pages of the paper, so can you.

These reasons, among a slew of others on this list, were enough to make the majority of the editors agree to support and promote the manipulating advertising of the multi-national corporation ... and, indirectly, the addiction, cancer, birth defects, respirators, black lungs, and ultimately death.

The Daily has never been in support of these things, so why should it all of a sudden begin now? Like every independent university paper, we are undersponsored and underappreciated by the campus community. Our purpose has always been to act as a forum for dis-

cussion of issues largely ignored by mainstream media, to expose and discuss racial, gender, and class inequalities. Yet how can we call ourselves "alternative media" if we are supporting the money-hungry power-laden multi-nationals which we criticize? How can we claim to retain our integrity as an alternative to mainstream press if our business practices are not in accordance with our principles?

These questions linger in the back of all the editors' minds, both those who voted for the ads and those who voted against them. Currently, The Daily Boycott List, a list of companies that were refused advertising in the Daily due to unethical practices, is under reconstruction. We are searching for ways to stay afloat financially, without becoming entirely hypocritical. It is a difficult task for the editorial board to tackle, especially with the tri-weekly duties of assigning, editing and publishing articles.

So, until we can come to a conclusion concerning the now defunct boycott list, The Daily is an ashamed and disgusted sponsor of Du Maurier Cigarettes.

MUCTC fare increases (continued from page 1)

"We would advise against it," said DesGroseiller, "but that's their decision."

Fee Increase

Here's something else to think about if you're a commuter. As of April 1, the MUCTC transit fees will be increasing. The MUCTC claims that "[to] preserve the appeal of our services, we will adopt a flexible rate scale that reflects the value of the assorted services available to assorted types of customers."

According to MUCTC, the increases are due to "Loss of ridership and successive reductions in ... public financing." The new rates will allow MUCTC to "recuperate the maximum value produced by the improvement of existing services and the development of new products, without ... letting our quality/price ratio deteriorate."

The new public transport rates remain low for a major North American urban centre. There was however political pressure from last season's mayoral campaign to fix fares for all students including those over eighteen.

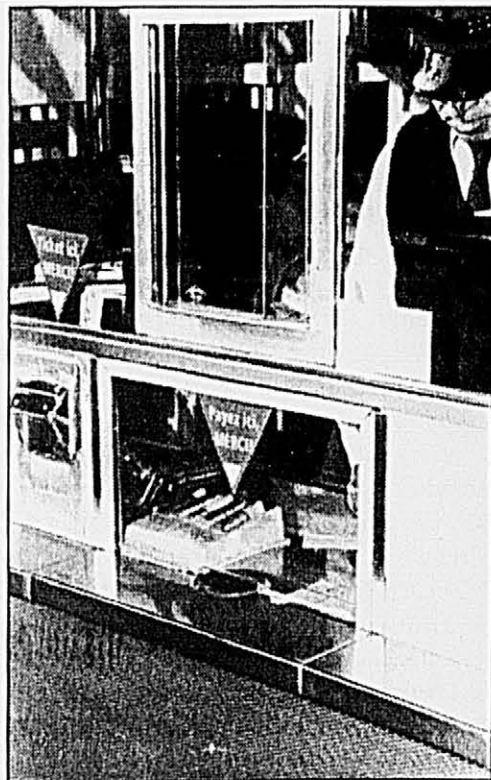
Sell Out

Though the increases in transit

rates are certainly bound to aid the MUCTC in their struggle for cash, they are not the only steps being taken. In a "daring commercial approach to increase revenues from advertising and rental of commercial space," MUCTC has given a bit more ground to the forces of free-market capitalism. In exchange for valuable advertising dollars, the MUCTC has agreed to sell the metro trains themselves as a form of advertisement. The entire exterior of the train will be painted in a manner decided upon by the company, though, in the words of MUCTC, "The Corporation is still mindful of good taste, in form as well as in content."

A "Superame SilverTab de Levi's" has already made a run on the green line, and a "Superame de Lait" has been designed and will begin service shortly. Other companies to sign on so far include Molson Breweries for its Molson Ultra beer, the GAP Jeans Company and Lise Watier Perfumes.

According to



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Bourque's Trip to China Draws Fire

MAYOR TO ASK MCGILL TO JOIN TASK FORCE ON CHINA

BY JASON CHOW

"If [Mayor Bourque] wants to be emperor of China, I'll crown him myself," said angry municipal councillor Helen Fotopulos.

Bourque, along with nine members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Montréal, has been on an economic expedition since December 27; he returns on January 10.

Fotopulos, the Équipe Montréal member from Mile End, was critical of the mayor's trip to China.

"There are problems here in Montréal that need to be addressed.... His job is to take care of business in Montréal."

Fotopulos also criticized Bourque taking on the unpaid

position of special adviser on social and economic development to the Yunnan province in China.

"Why is he wearing two hats? He is in it for the glory and worship of the Chinese government," said Fotopulos.

André Cardinal, a Montréal Citizens Movement (MCM) councillor for the Plateau, interpreted the trip as a backing of the communist regime: "He supports the Chinese authoritarian government. [His trip] is both frivolous and immoral."

Fotopulos repeated similar criticisms and said that "human rights has never been a foremost priority [for Bourque]."

But Bill Wong, vice-president of the Chinese Chamber of Com-

merce, advocated patience before critics shout their opposition.

"I think this is a good experience," said Wong. "It gives a signal to the outside that both Chinatown and Montréal are open for business. We have to wait and see if anything concrete comes out of it."

Wong added that the trip was the first time that an all-Chinese delegation has taken on an economic mission to China from Canada.

Fotopulos was not so certain of the mandate of the trip, citing his previous trip to China as an example of the mayor's ulterior motives. Last January, Bourque claimed he was on vacation in China; it has since been discov-

ered that his trip was fully subsidized by the Chinese government.

"Why are we there?" she demanded. "It serves us nothing."

Michaeli Cantero, press aide of the mayor's office, commented that the trip raises the profile of Montréal. "The mayor is well-known in China. They are interested in our expertise."

MCM councillor Theoret for De Lorimier questioned the expense of the trip, claiming that he has had great difficulty retrieving information about the costs of the trip. As a member of the council's ethical committee, he tried to obtain this information, but was denied each time.

"I've asked seven questions

about this, and on each of them, I've not received a sufficient answer. The personal involvement is not clear. We don't know how much is being spent," said Theoret. "This is a very embarrassing situation."

While the opposition grumbles at home, Bourque is already working at his new advisory job. He promised to contact the principal and rector of McGill and Université de Montréal respectively on forming a task force on the Yunnan province to study environment problems and the province's minority groups. He also said that he would like to see the two universities become associated with the University of Yunnan.

People with Environmental Illnesses Assaulted by Everyday Smells

BY L. J. LATKOCZKY

WINNIPEG (CUP) - When Jennifer Polle became seriously ill and bedridden with stomach pains, rashes, shortness of breath and chest pains, doctors had a hard time diagnosing her. At first, they thought she had a virus or chronic fatigue syndrome.

"Then a lot of things came together," Polle explains. "Red rashes would appear around my eyes when I was around perfume."

Soon, doctors detected solvents and pesticides in her blood including benzene and its derivative toluene, commonly found in paints, adhesives and carpets.

Eventually, Polle was diagnosed with allergies to mold and pesticides, and it was recommended that she move from Winnipeg to a drier, desert climate.

Her environmental illness meant she had to drop out of the University of Winnipeg for the sake of her health and move to the hills outside Albuquerque, NM.

"I lost my home in Winnipeg after a spraying for pesticides," she says, adding her new living conditions are nowhere near perfect.

"I try to live my life as normal as possible and I think that's important."

But Polle is still unable to stay in a building for long periods of time because of the many chemicals found in most building constructions.

For people like Polle who have multiple chemical sensitivity,

life\ literally stinks.

Sufferers can get headaches from various odours, such as perfumes, colognes, paints and the smell of new carpets. For those who live with the illness, the slightest smell that was once tolerable now makes them sick.

Those afflicted with multiple chemical sensitivity have usually experienced toxic amounts of substances most people take for granted every day, through repeated exposure to synthetic chemicals present in many common household products.

Studies suggest that somewhere between a sixth and a third of the population has chemical sensitivities to some degree, with some more serious than others.

But environmental illnesses are preventable and treatable.

And sometimes, some of the debilitating effects of allergies can be reversed, says Judith Spence, president of the Environmental Illness Society of Canada.

Sometimes, that means changing your home or work environment.

Marg Friesen, who also has multiple chemical sensitivity, found herself increasingly bothered by the chloroform and formaldehyde used in her more than 20 years of lab work as a government biologist.

"I used to think I had allergies or a cold," she says. "Then when I became more and more fatigued I thought I had chronic fatigue syndrome."

Realizing she had chemical

sensitivities, Friesen decided to make a career change, switching to the field of DNA testing. But she soon discovered organic solvents were required in that job as well.

Eventually diagnosed with autoimmune hepatitis and inflammatory bowel disease, Friesen once again moved on, this time away from lab work and toward office work and database management.

"If I had had symptoms as a student, I would have chosen another field," she says.

Many common aromas, such as perfumes, gasoline, chlorine and cleaning supplies have come to cause her headaches, fatigue, dizziness, brain fog and sore throats.

Now, Friesen tries to raise awareness about environmental illnesses by working with the Chemical Sensitivities Information Exchange Network in Manitoba. But awareness about environmental illnesses is hard-earned, especially when multiple-chemical sensitivity is so hard to diagnose in the first place.

Many sufferers are first diagnosed as having allergies, partly because general medicine generally only recognizes diseases arising from infection, immunity suppression and cancer.

But with less than one per cent of 1,000 new chemicals tested for toxicity each year, the number of misfits is expected to rise.

Cathy Ford, a pesticide chemist working at the Canadian Grain

Commission, also became ill from exposure to chemicals after her fume hood was inadvertently shut off.

Feeling immediately ill with flu-like symptoms, Ford hopped in a taxi home. But her symptoms did not go away.

After seeing several doctors, she was diagnosed with a chemical sensitivity to organic solvents.

Almost overnight, she had developed an intolerance to diesel fuel, tar, new furniture stores and her child's plastic toy. She also gets headaches when she attends concerts or passes the detergent aisle at the grocery store.

Ford advises students to check up on how buildings work.

"Check out the air quality. Be more responsible for your own health safety than I was with mine. I did not trust my gut interest and research the fume hood. I wish I had not ignored my gut interest," she says.

Environmental illness activists have long been struggling to have their problems - and the cause of them - taken seriously.

In Canada, the environmental illness movement took off in Halifax after one of the most devastating sick building syndrome incidents in the world at the Camp Hill Hospital in 1989.

A few months after the opening of the new hospital, more than 200 workers fell ill.

The new building's air intake and exhaust pipes and were close together and it was full of chemical fumes.

Before long, the local population became educated and interested in indoor air quality.

"Because we had a fertile ground here, Camp Hill became recognized for what it is," says Halifax nurse Karen Robinson.

"Camp Hill did not kill anyone, but it ruined their lives, killed their lives."

Robinson wants to help prevent similar tragedies from happening again in other buildings, such as her children's school.

She works with the Citizens for A Safe Learning Environment, a small group of parents whose children are environmentally disabled. The group lobbies the provincial government and local school board to decrease the use of agitating substances, such as bathroom deodorizers, mop oil and paints.

Where children are concerned, over-exposure to chemicals and synthetics can have effects not normally seen among adults. Some doctors believe environmental illnesses can cause attention deficit disorder in some children.

University of Manitoba student Bridget Dupuis, who developed a lower threshold for a number of smells, says she's grateful to learn about the environmental illness movement.

"For the first time I realized it's not just me," says the food science major, who believes her hours in the lab handling chemicals used to break up proteins contributed to her condition.

Legal Defence Fund for APEC Protesters Growing

BY CARLA TONELLI

TORONTO (CUP) - University faculty across Canada are boosting a nationwide movement of support for student protesters at last year's APEC summit in Vancouver by sending cash to help fund legal costs for the inquiry set to resume in the next few weeks.

By prompting the Canadian Association of University Teachers to send the latest donation of \$500 to the APEC Protesters Legal Defence Fund, faculty associations from coast-to-coast have contributed \$7,000 to the fund collected by the British Columbia Federation of Labour. So far, about \$115,000 has been raised from individuals and labour unions.

Jim Turk, executive director of the association, says it's a disgrace the federal government has refused to take responsibility for the students' expenses, which have been climbing upward of \$240,000 since October when their defence lawyers stopped working for free.

"It's unbalanced for the government to say the students aren't entitled to legal defence when all the other parties involved are," Turk said, pointing to Ottawa's decision to pay most of the legal costs for the RCMP and the federal departments involved in the

hearings.

"The student protesters are every bit as much a central part of the hearing as all the other participants," Turk added.

The Canadian Association of University Teachers, which represents 56 faculty associations and 28,000 professors and librarians across the country, says it's deeply troubled by the treatment of the student protesters at the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation summit last year, as well as at the RCMP Public Complaints Commission hearings.

"It's not surprising at all that faculty would support students," said Miriam Sobrino, director of communications for the B.C. Federation of Labour.

"They're at universities and post-secondary institutions, which are supposed to be places to expand knowledge and not be afraid to try out new ideas."

What is surprising, Sobrino says, is that so many individuals have lent financial support to the students' legal defence fund even with the risk of landing their names on government surveillance lists.

"If you're on the record as supporting this, that means you're on the record as opposing the federal government," Sobrino said.

While the students may not be accused of crimes per se, the aggressive manner in which they've been interrogated by Ottawa's lawyers justifies the public funding of their defence, she added.

But the federal government maintains that because the students are not accused of anything, regardless of interrogation tactics, they're on their own to fund legal costs.

"They are the ones making the accusations," said Athana Mentzelopoulos, spokeswoman for the federal government's lawyers.

Government regulations require that Ottawa cover the costs of legal defence whenever a government employee is accused of anything, she added.

"The question has remained, why do (students) require legal assistance?" she said.

The three Canada Justice employees working as federal government lawyers cost around \$2,000 a day, Mentzelopoulos said.

Anyone wishing to contribute to the legal defence fund can send cheques to the B.C. Federation of Labour, APEC Protesters Legal Support Fund, c/o Ste. 200, 5118 Joyce St., Vancouver, B.C. V5R 4H1.

University of Victoria Student Missing



Steven

McLaughlin

Missing Since: December 22, 1998

Age: 27

Height: 6'3"

Hair: Light Brown, Balding
Eyes: Grey

BY DARREN STEWART

VICTORIA (CUP) - A student at the University of Victoria was still missing last week after more than two weeks in what police are describing as a suspicious case.

Steven McLaughlin was reported missing on Dec. 23 after he failed to show up at his parents' house for the Christmas holidays.

Police say he was last seen the day before, and hasn't checked his answering machine, accessed his bank account or used his vehicle since then.

"Everything he has is here," said officer Paul Morrison, of the Saanich division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

"We have to be suspicious. We can't rule out suicide, his just taking a holiday or even foul play."

Search and rescue teams have combed the university area and the surrounding brush and beaches with helicopters in the hopes of learning something about McLaughlin's whereabouts. But they've had little luck.

"This is strange for any case. I

mean, where is he? We have nothing attached to this person to lean on," said Morrison.

A psychology professor who was the last person to see McLaughlin says he was on campus that day looking into on-campus employment.

McLaughlin held down several jobs at the university and volunteered periodically for the campus radio station.

Police say they're hoping that with all the people who knew McLaughlin through his various connections to the university, somebody will be able to give them a clue about what happened.

The university's own security department would also like to get to the bottom of the case.

"It's primarily a police investigation," said Ken Morrison, assistant director of campus security services. "But we're offering any sort of assistance or information they need to find this gentleman."

UVic Suspends Prof after Marijuana Conviction

BY DARREN STEWART

VICTORIA (CUP) - Sociology students at the University of Victoria were met with a shock last week when they returned to classes to find out the school has suspended one of their teachers.

Following a recommendation from university president Dr. David Strong, the school suspended Prof. Jean Veevers and relieved her of her duties.

Effective immediately, the interim suspension follows Veevers' recent conviction in British Columbia Supreme Court of cultivating marijuana for the purpose of trafficking.

Veevers has been on medical leave since April 1997, when police raided her home and found an elaborate marijuana-growing operation.

She pleaded guilty to the charge of growing the substance for the purpose of trafficking last October. Her Dec. 4 sentence included a \$15,000 fine, a one-year conditional sentence that she can serve at home and 60 hours of community service.

In a prepared statement to the public about the decision, Strong said the suspension was based on evidence submitted to the court during Veevers' trial.

While Veevers declined to speak to the media herself, her legal counsel, Mel Hunt, said she was surprised by the suspension.

"She was quite astonished," he said. "She certainly didn't expect anything like that."

Hunt said Veevers plans to fight for her career by invoking

the university's arbitration process to challenge the suspension.

"If the arbitrators decide there is no just cause for dismissal then that will be the end of this," said Hunt. "But if they decide there was just cause the case goes to the board of governors to decide. One would expect them to follow the president's recommendation."

The university administration agrees the issue is far from resolved.

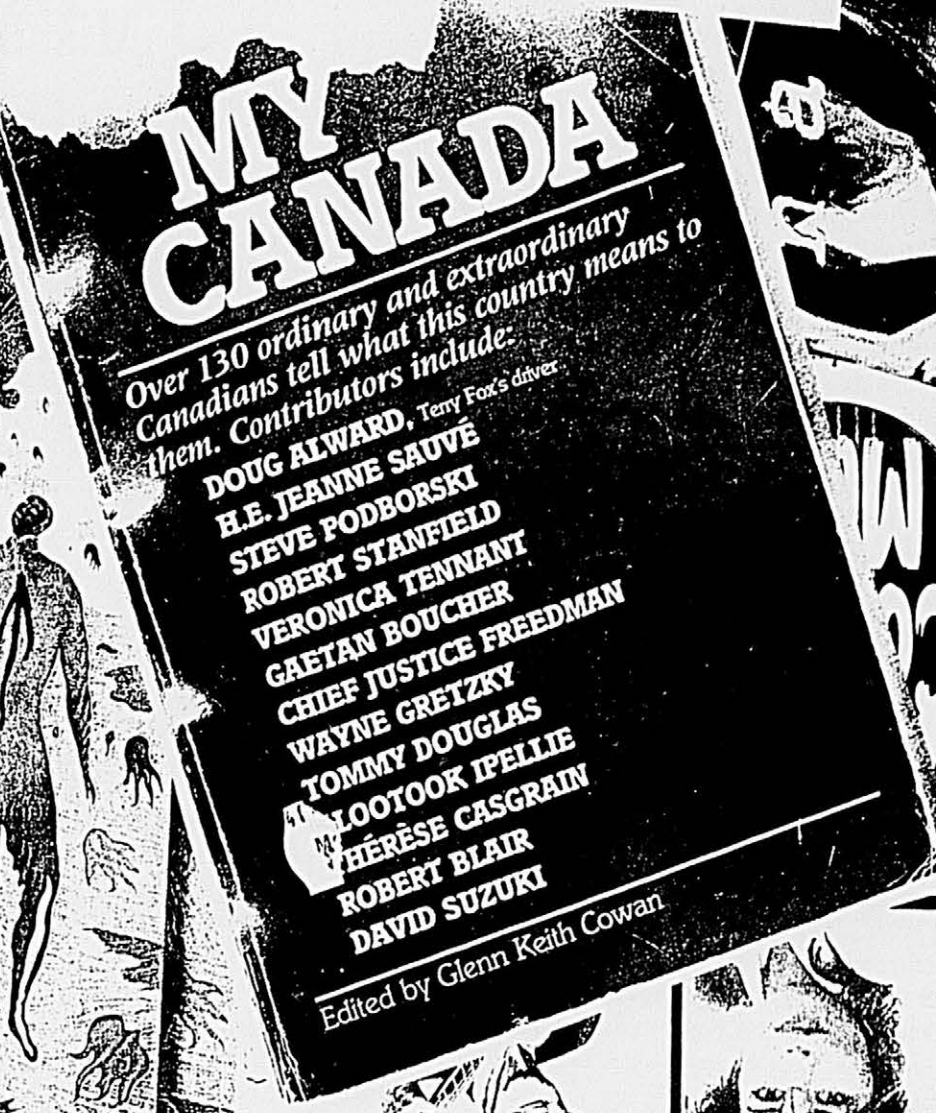
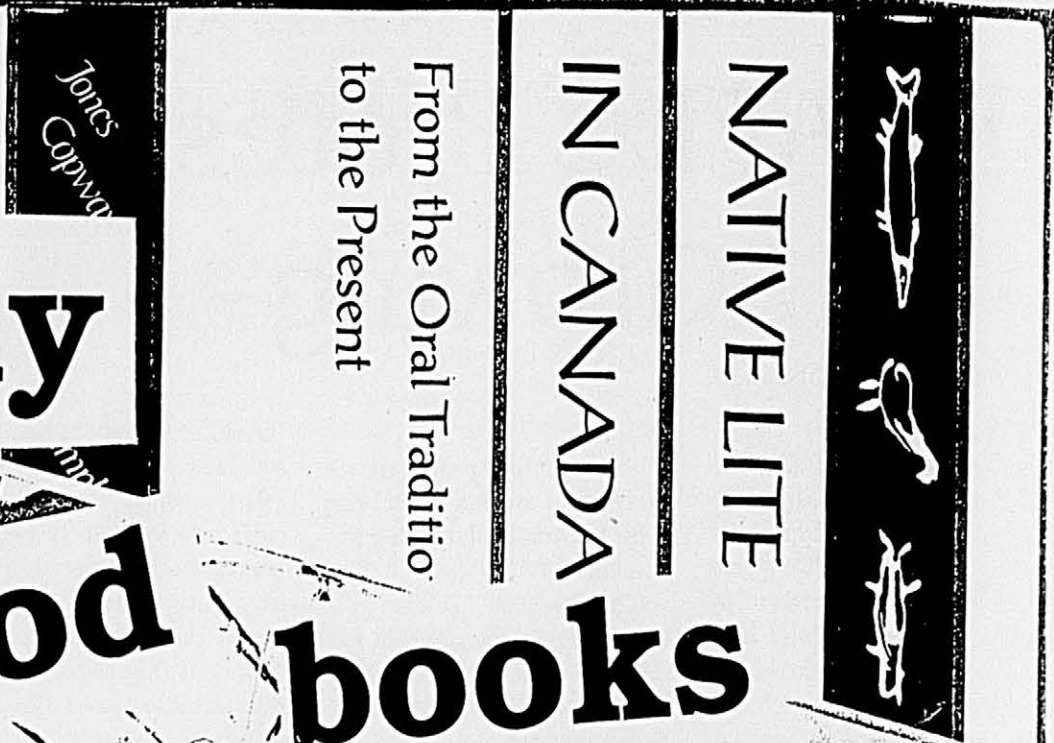
"The president has made a recommendation and the board makes a final decision," said Bruce Kilpatrick, director of communications with the University of Victoria. "There is no indication when this will happen as of yet."

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Comic Mike Bullard Provides a Fresh Take on Prime-Time Talk Shows

BY YARON BLANC

TORONTO (CUP) - Mike Bullard puts his feet up on his desk and smiles. "I feel less pressure than I did a year ago," says the host of Canada's hottest new late night talk show.

"(CTV) pumped about \$4 million into the show, so now I can just sit back. I figure I'll get at least two years out of doing nothing."

But the suburban Toronto native has made nothing into something to talk about. In the span of a year, his television show *Open Mike with Mike Bullard* has gone from a small-scale production to the most-talked-about hit of the season.

Produced by The Comedy Network, the show has become a staple on Canadian nightly airwaves. As such, it is being hailed as a first in the industry: a successful Canadian prime-time talk show.

Now in its second season on CTV, *Open Mike* blends Bullard's off-the-cuff comedy with eclectic guests and has developed a strong following and critical praise.

That's partly because Bullard - who once worked for the Ontario Provincial Police and Bell Canada and has toured the stand-up circuit for years - brings a daring approach to a medium often criticized for its lack of innovation.

"The kind of stand-up that I did prepared me well for television," says Bullard. "It was very spontaneous, and I would never do a routine. It probably prepared me to work by the seat of my pants for that hour every night . . . it's also given me chops, and the confidence to walk out and talk to people every night."

Bullard's nightly forays into the audience, which he likes to poke fun at, are one of the show's highlights.

They also make *Open Mike*

stand out in the formulaic world of nightly talk shows, where audience interaction is often deemed too dangerous for a medium thriving on format.

Bullard wouldn't have it any other way.

"It's the only way to keep me excited," he says.

"I can't stand monology; it's never been my forte. For me, the excitement is talking to a member of the audience, and I think it's the only way to change people's attitudes in this country, because people would come and do anything to avoid the front row. Now they sit there. Now they bring signs. They want me to talk to them, and that's very gratifying."

Open Mike producer Al Magee agrees Bullard's spontaneous interaction with the audience is a key ingredient in the show's success.

"Traditionally, they wouldn't do it in television because it's too risky," he says. "Nobody



could get the number of laughs per minute to make that format work. Mike's so good at it that that's really all he ever did. He didn't have an act doing stand-up."

However he does it, Bullard's ability to draw in viewers night after night is a huge accomplishment in an industry with a brief and pitiful talk-show history.

Previous attempts at prime-time talk shows, which often borrowed ideas from south of the border, have been largely unsuccessful.

In the late-1970s, Peter Gzowski's *90 Minutes Live* was nothing more than a rip-off of Johnny Carson's *The Tonight Show*. More recently, the early 1990s *Friday Night! With Ralph Benmergui*, a misguided variety show, smacked of American mimicry. Both succumbed to lack of interest by fans and critics alike.

Open Mike has also introduced something new into the Canadian talk show equation: comedian hosts.

"They had never done it with a comic before, and that's the whole problem," says Bullard. "You got to do it with comedians. They did it with journalists, and you can't do it. Journalists can't be funny."

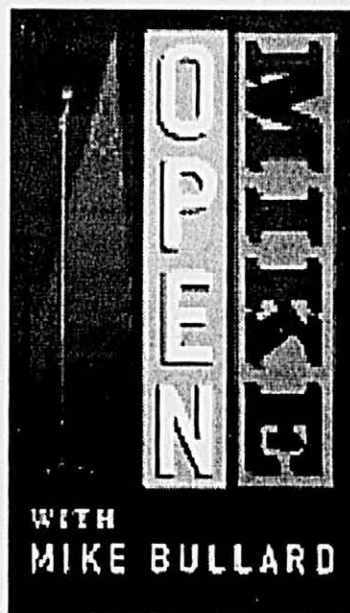
And unlike its predecessors, *Open Mike* doesn't seem like a reproduction of American shows.

Bullard's quick wit and spontaneous improvisation techniques reflect a fresh, unrestricted design that wouldn't be allowed to flourish in the U.S.

"Watch an American talk show and watch some of the things we do," says Bullard. "There's no comparison. There's a little thing down there called standards and practices. I'd be in trouble with them every night, because there are things you don't do down there, and I'd break all the rules."

For example, U.S. nightly

talk shows are shaped around a rigid system of scripted monologues, pre-taped desk bits and celebrity interviews.



They also focus on promoting guests rather than generating in-depth, comedic conversation between them and the host.

"They sign five-minute wonders constantly based on how they look," says Bullard. "Everything down there is based on how you look - an empty suit with a good face."

Magee agrees.

"They're really not trying to provide live, exciting television," he says.

"If they have a big-name guest on, often times they (hosts) don't always have a lot to say . . . they don't even feel compelled to entertain necessarily. It's enough that they're on the show. And here, Mike drives the show. It's about his personality at every corner."

Still, the success of *Open Mike* seems to be creating a rare phenomenon in the Canadian entertainment business: a domestic star-system.

With three to four guests on the show, which airs five nights a week, *Open Mike* has become the

centre stage for homegrown performers and artists to spotlight their talents.

This, above all, satisfies Bullard.

"We're making celebrities," he says. "To me there's nothing better. (Filmmaker) Bruce LaBruce came back the second time and said he couldn't believe how many people were walking up to him and saying they saw him on the show. To me that's great; that's what it's all about."

Ultimately, though, Bullard says *Open Mike* is about the viewers.

"The bottom line is I don't do the show for anybody but the people who watch it," he says.

"Based on the e-mails and ratings I'm really happy, because I know there's a guy out in Saskatchewan who owns a wheat farm who's watching the show, and a guy in Newfoundland who's not fishing for cod who's watching the show. And that to me is what the show's all about."

(continued from front page)

Friday began with a hearing in front of the Québec Labour Commission in an effort to officially construct a union at Agmont. Roderick Carreon is still officially fired and his reinstatement is one of three demands that will be made by the time the hearing is over. The other two are immediate negotiations between Agmont and UNITE, and an end to harassment and intimidation by Aikens and his management.

The Labour Commission gave Agmont a week to respond to the first demand. Court dates have been set for January 20 and February 3 to discuss the other concerns.

When asked to comment on their role in the labour controversy, Agmont management failed to return any of the Daily's calls.



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The McGill Daily *Statement of Principles*

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The fundamental goal of The McGill Daily shall be to serve a critical and constructive forum for the exchange of ideas and information about McGill University and related communities.

(2.2) Within this optic, the staff of the Daily recognizes that all events and issues are inherently political, involving relations of social and economic power. Further, we recognize that at present, power is unevenly distributed, especially (but not solely) on the bases of gender, age, social class, race, sexuality, disability and cultural identity.

We also recognize that keeping silent about this situation helps to perpetuate it. Instead, to help correct these inequities, to the best of its staff's abilities, the Daily should depict and analyze power relations accurately in its coverage.

(2.3) As an autonomous student newspaper, relatively free from commercial and other controls, the Daily can best serve its purposes by examining issues and events most media ignore.

In particular, it should deal with the role post-secondary education plays in constructing and maintaining the current order. It should also assist students and other groups working for change, within a critical framework, with the aim of empowering and giving a voice to individuals and communities marginalized on the basis of the criteria mentioned in paragraph 2.2.

The Daily's methods should be both educative and active as determined democratically by its staff.

(2.4) Finally, we recognize that the Daily must remain accessible to the student community it comes from, and should abide by an ethic of fairness (as defined in the Code of Ethics) while maintaining its autonomy.

daily classifieds

Ads may be placed through the Daily Business Office, Room B-07, University Centre, 9h00-14h00. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students & Staff (with valid ID): \$4.75 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$4.25 per day. General Public: \$6.00 per day, or \$5.00 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. Extra charges may apply, prices include applicable GST or PST. Full payment should accompany your advertising order and may be made in cash or by personal cheque (for amounts over \$20 only). For more information, please visit our office or call 398-6790. WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD CAREFULLY WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE PAPER. The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damages due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

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